Regional Agencies Smart Growth Strategy
Bay Area Alliance for Sustainable Development Regional Livability Footprint Project

KEY TERMS AND METHODOLOGY

1.   Planning Areas

Planning Areas are geographic areas described as polygons in PLACES and defined based on recognized distinctions in geography and land use. Planning Areas are defined only for those portions of a County that are already urbanized or that are under discussion for urbanization.

Planning Areas fall into one of several Planning Area Categories, which are listed below:

◆   **Key Site.** Sites of significant size that are undeveloped and/or have been proposed for development.
◆   **Downtown.** The central business district of an area.
◆   **Small Town.** A developed area that has no more than approximately 2,000 people.
◆   **Corridor.** An arterial with major rail/bus/transit.
◆   **Employment Center/Institution.** An area where the uses are primarily business or light industrial. Includes universities, shopping malls and other large institutions.
◆   **Residential.** An area where the uses are primarily residential whether single- or multi-family.
◆   **Mixed-use Neighborhood.** An area that is characterized by a highly integrated level of mixed uses (commercial and housing).
◆   **Areas Around Rail Stations and Major Bus Transfer Facilities** are shown on the county base map with a hatched pattern and are also planning areas.

2.   Place Types

Place Types are land use types that consist of a housing density, an employment density, and an image that can be applied at workshops to a Planning Area. PLACES will see the two densities as inputs; the images are intended to aid public understanding.

The densities assigned to each Place Type will need to be verified against conditions on the ground in similar neighborhoods.

The Place Types correspond roughly to Planning Area Categories, but there is not a one-to-one correspondence. For example, there is no Place Type called "Key Site" or "Rail Station/Major Transfer Facility Area." Participants can assign any Place Type to a Key Site or Rail Station/Major Transfer Facility Area. It is also true that participants are allowed to assign any Place Type to any of the other Planning Area categories. They are not constrained to choosing from the Place Types that correspond to a particular Planning Area category. However, the Place Types are grouped to help give the participants a starting point for their decision-making process.

There is a Place Type Book that illustrates each Place Type with photos, maps and statistics.

The PLACES operator will also be able to create new Place Types "on the fly" to participants' specifications if desired.

3.   Grid Cell
The grid cell is the underlying geographic unit used by PLACES to calculate land uses. It is 10 acres in size. It is never seen by workshop participants unless participants apply new development to land outside a Planning Area.

4.   Base Case

PLACES has underlying information for each Planning Area about two numerical "Base Cases," each of which is expressed as a total number of jobs and a total number of housing units within the Planning Area. (PLACES may do some other machinations to use or display these numbers, but the user is only aware that PLACES knows these numbers.)

The two "Base Cases" are defined as follows:
1.   **2000 Conditions.** These are the current number of housing units and jobs actually in the Planning Area as of 2000.

2.   **2020 Projected Conditions.** These are the numbers of housing units and jobs projected by ABAG to occur in the Planning Area in 2020.

Both of these two Base Cases will be supplied as inputs to PLACES. They should both be available for view, reference and comparison by users working with PLACES.

5.   Scenario

A Scenario is a combination of at least one new Place Type applied to at least one Planning Area over either of the Base Cases.

Actual "Scenarios" will likely involve decisions about multiple planning areas. In creating a new "Scenario," PLACES has the following options for each Planning Area:

1.   The user elects to leave the Planning Area unchanged. In that case, the 2000 Conditions Base Case for the Planning Area is included in the Scenario.

2.   The user elects to apply a <u>single</u> new Place Type for the Planning Area. In that case, PLACES removes data about the Base Case(s) for the Planning Area, and replaces it with a new calculation represented by [Planning Area Acreage * Densities in the Place Type]. This results in a new projection of jobs and housing units, which is included in the Scenario.

3.   The user elects to create and entirely new Place Type by applying a <u>combination</u> of Place Types for the Planning Area. In that case, PLACES removes data about the Base Case(s) for the Planning Area, and replaces it with a new calculation represented by [Sum of [Planning Area Acreage * Densities in the Place Type * % of Planning Area to which Place Type applies]]. This results in a new projection of jobs and housing units, which is included in the Scenario.

        For this approach to work, the user must specify the percentage of the Planning Area to which each type will be applied, but not necessarily the locations within the Planning Area where it occurs.

4.   The user elects to leave the Planning Area essentially unchanged, but thinks that there might be increment of new housing or employment, for example through infill units or the insertion of a new shopping center. In that case, the user can specify that the 2000 Conditions Base Case for the Planning Area is included in the Scenario, together with an additional increment of x% of the existing number of housing units and/or jobs. This option is still under development and may not be available for the beta tests.

        In this case, the increment would NOT be applied to a specific location in the Planning Area, since the user would be assuming that it would occur "in general through" infill.

5.   The user elects to accept ABAG's projected 2020 conditions for the Planning Area. In that case, the 2020 Projected Conditions Base Case for the Planning Area is included in the Scenario.

6.   Predictors

Predictors are numerical measurements that tell the quantified performance of a given Scenario. PLACES will output the following predictors, for the two base cases and each scenario a group creates.

1.   Housing Availability, Affordability and Displacement
1.   Housing Units
2.   Jobs

2. Mobility and Traffic Congestion
1. Proximity of Housing to rail stations and buses lines with headways 10 minutes or less
2. Proximity of Jobs to rail stations and buses lines with headways 10 minutes or less

3. Environmental Quality
1. Infill v. Greenfield Development
2. Energy Consumption
3. Water Consumption

4. Livability and Community Vitality
1. Pedestrian Environmental Quality (sum of an index for pedestrian quality of each Place Type, times the number of jobs and units in each Place Type)